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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 557

By White

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Judge Ottis Knippers of
Lawrenceburg.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the death of Ottis Knippers, Sr., noted Gospel music singer, songwriter and musician, County Judge and former state representative and state senator; and

WHEREAS, Judge Knippers was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities; he had held several local public offices with distinction, including Lawrence County Judge, and he was instrumental in promoting tourism in Lawrence County and establishing the James D. Vaughan Museum; and

WHEREAS, he had served astutely as a member of the House of Representatives of the Tennessee General Assembly, from 1941-45 and 1949-51; He then served in the Senate from 1957-61; and

WHEREAS, a longtime resident of Lawrence County, Ottis Knippers was a highly respected member of the Lawrenceburg community; he was a successful businessman and owned a furniture store for many years; and

WHEREAS, Judge Knippers was perhaps best known for his career in Gospel music. He came from his native Louisiana to Lawrenceburg in the 1920s to study music under the founder of Southern Gospel Music, James D. Vaughan; and

WHEREAS, Ottis Knippers became a noted singer, songwriter and musician, composing such Gospel greats as "Let the Sunshine In," "What A Wonderful Time It Will Be," and "The Hallelujah Way." He and his brother Cecil made up the Knippers Duet, and he later sang with the Vaughan Trio and the Vaughan Quartet; and

WHEREAS, Judge Knippers was featured on more than 50 radio stations, where he was known as the "Dixie Poet"; he also served a stint as co-manager of station KLCN in Blytheville, Arkansas; and

WHEREAS, Ottis Knippers recorded on the Gennett, Champion and Victor labels and was a featured performer on Lawrenceburg station WDXE from 1951 until his death. In addition to his other talents, he wrote several books on various subjects; and

WHEREAS, Ottis Knippers was also deeply devoted to his family, and he always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, Judge Knippers enjoyed the loving companionship of his wife, Opal Moody Knippers, and was the proud parent of Ottis Knippers, Jr., Jan Carolyn Knippers Black and Nancy Knippers Ray, all of whom survive him; and

WHEREAS, Judge Knippers leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional artist of Gospel music, public servant and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That we honor the memory of Ottis Knippers, Sr., reflecting fondly upon his

impeccable character and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family and many friends of Ottis Knippers.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.